

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed June 3, 2004 ("*Office Action*"). The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-20, 22, 23, and 25-31 and objects to Claims 4, 13, 21, 24, and 32. Applicant amends Claims 1, 6, 14, 22, and 25 to incorporate the limitations of Claims 4, 13, 21, 24, and 32, respectively, and cancels Claims 4, 13, 21, 24, and 32. These amendments place all claims in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to Claims 4, 13, 21, 24, and 32 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but indicates that each of these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. To hasten issuance of allowed claims, Applicant amends Claims 1, 6, 14, 22, and 25 to incorporate the limitations of Claims 4, 13, 21, 24, and 32, respectively. This places all claims in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the timely and favorable consideration of these claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-20, 22, 23, and 25-31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,522,880, which issued to Verma, et al. ("*Verma*"), in view of U.S. Publication No. 2001/0036834, which issued to Das, et al. ("*Das*"). As noted above, Applicant presently amends all of the independent claims into allowable form, thus obviating the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103. Applicant believes all originally submitted claims to be patentable over the cited references, and thus reserves the right to pursue the originally submitted claims in continuation applications.

Conclusion

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place the Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of all pending claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of the Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Although no fees are believed to be currently due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Pankratz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kurt M. Pankratz
Reg. No. 46,977

Date: September 3, 2004

Customer ID No. 05073